



The Journal

Vol. 26

No. 40

www.cnic.navy.mil/bethesda/

October 2, 2014

Teamwork, Patient Safety Theme of New Initiative

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Public Affairs
staff writer

Walter Reed Bethesda has rolled out its TeamSTEPPS initiatives to enhance performance and patient safety at the medical center.

Implementation of TeamSTEPPS falls under Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) Director Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Jeffrey B. Clark's Quality and Safety Campaign for 2014. Dr. Tom Fitzpatrick, assistant chief of staff for quality at the medical center, is leading this effort.

TeamSTEPPS, which stands for Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety, is a teamwork system developed jointly by the Department of Defense (DOD) Patient Safety Program and the Department of Health and Human Services' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). It's designed to improve collaboration and communication relating to patient

safety, explained Victor Mosley, patient safety administrator for Walter Reed Bethesda.

Navy Capt. Sarah Martin, Walter Reed Bethesda chief of staff, recently explained TeamSTEPPS is being integrated with the medical center's Patient Caring Touch (PCT) goals. She said TeamSTEPPS and PCT have similar components, and the both are designed to ensure that the patient is at the center in all health care delivery environments.

Army Col. Ray C. Antoine, director of nursing at WRNMMC, added PCT provides a framework for nursing and other staff to reduce clinical quality variance by adopting a set of internal and external best practices in order to improve the quality of care provided to patients and their families.

Components of PCT include enhanced communication, patient advocacy, capability building, health work environments and evidence-based practices,

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Photo by Bernard S. Little

Instructors for TeamSTEPPS (Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety) at Walter Reed Bethesda, Army Staff Sgt. Eric Serano (left) and Army Staff Sgt. Angela Stevenson (right), discuss a lesson plan before a class.

NSAB Exchange Pharmacy Converting to Full Service



Photo by Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class Chris Krucke

Pharmacy technician Floyd Newsome displays one of the new pagers that will alert customers when their prescriptions are ready at the NEX pharmacy.

By Mass Communication
Specialist 2nd Class (AW)
Chris Krucke
WRNMMC Public Affairs
staff writer

The Navy Exchange (NEX) Pharmacy aboard Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) will be full service starting Oct. 15. For beneficiaries, officials said this could mean shorter wait times and easier parking.

Navy Cmdr. William E. Kelly, deputy director for the Department of Pharmacy, explains the importance of the upgrade of the pharmacy from a pick-up site to a full satellite pharmacy.

"We are converting it to a full satellite to move our refill operations to that site," to help reduce congestion at the Arrowhead

and America building pharmacies Kelly said. "We want our beneficiaries to know they can have their prescriptions filled [at the NEX], as well as from 19 other clinics in the National Capital Region."

According to Navy Lt. Angela Jiatu, officer in charge of the NEX pharmacy, Jiatu said "the full service aspect is going to change where [patients] can bring in their hard copies and have them filled."

The NEX becoming full service will also help alleviate wait time from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center's (WRNMMC) other two pharmacies, Kelly said, adding that WRNMMC continues to address wait times in all pharmacy locations. "We are their final stop, [before going home]. Hopefully,

utilization of the NEX pharmacy for refills will allow us to get those patients who have been here for an appointment, or are about to be discharged, on their way sooner."

Retired U.S. Coast Guard Lt. Mike Carney, who has long standing medical issues that he says can be somewhat complicated, has been a patient at Walter Reed for 25 years. Carney stated when the NEX Pharmacy goes full service, he would like to get up and move around and get a coffee at the food court and do some shopping while he waits for his prescription to be filled.

To alleviate the boredom of waiting rooms, the NEX Pharmacy is implementing a new system to allow customers the

See **PHARMACY** page 7

Commandant's Corner

Team 88,
As we begin a new fiscal year, I think it is noteworthy that we kick it off with a particularly important topic and month: October is National Energy Action Month...a time for especially increased emphasis and positive influence on energy education, training, awareness, culture and action. Naval District Washington (NDW) and our all of our Installations will have a variety of efforts and activities which I encourage all hands to actively support and build upon. This month's message is: Energy Action = Mission Success.

Last year, I issued the NDW Energy Policy Statement to improve shore readiness and mission support through the judicious use of energy resources at all times, while building our NDW Regional Energy Strategy across five energy pillars: Energy Culture, Energy Information, Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy/Alternative Fuels, and, ultimately, Energy Security.

Building an effective Energy Culture starts with energy Awareness, a point of emphasis this month in particular. But Awareness isn't enough... a strong energy culture, one of conservation, must move from awareness to action – this will be our new emphasis beginning in October. Please take action! and do your part to reduce energy, water and fuel consumption on a daily basis. Please take action! and influence your co-workers and your entire organization to promote a healthy energy culture of prudent conservation. Throughout the month of October, we will be publishing articles and other sources of information with helpful information on the things you and everyone can do to be energy smart. You can make a difference!

Energy information continues to get better and better with the technology we are installing and enabling across the region and all of our activities. We recently completed the installation of advanced energy meters on over 800 buildings throughout NDW. These meters will significantly improve our ability to actively monitor energy consumption and enable our Installation Energy Managers (IEMs) and Building Energy Monitors (BEMs) to more effectively manage their facilities energy usage and, ultimately, provide more valuable information to all energy consumers.

Energy efficiency continues to drive our energy projects portfolio across every funding stream to capture the best possible projects with the highest return on investment. We have successfully competed for additional funding and thereby completed more diverse projects for the last several years in a row. Our efforts are paying clear dividends and I am extremely

pleased to report that NDW overall and each of our installations made tremendous progress in reducing Energy Intensity in FY14. Energy Intensity is the amount of energy consumed per square foot of facilities space. Energy Intensity is one of the key metrics in the SECNAV energy reduction goals and thanks to everyone's efforts and achievements, we are making great strides.

Renewable energy is a top priority for our national and naval leadership. Over the past year, we completed renewable energy assessments for all of our installations and are now moving forward with projects from our two best opportunities: large solar photovoltaic projects at both Joint Base Anacostia Bolling and Naval Air Station Patuxent River. Alternative Fuels is another important part of our renewable energy program and we continue to increase integration of alternative fuels vehicles and supporting infrastructure into our transportation fleets to reduce petroleum consumption, increase energy efficiency and reduce emissions.

Energy security is ultimately what all of this is all about. We cannot perform our missions without energy, but the less we need, the better we manage it and the more reliable we can make our sources, the more we can insulate our mission success from outside energy sources. We are indeed becoming more energy secure as a result of the efforts outlined above as well as some complementary, focused initiatives to improve the monitoring and control of facilities, utilities and energy through our state-of-the-art Shore Operations Center (ShOC) and associated Facilities and Energy Operations Cell (FEOC). Although these critical initiatives are still in their infancy, we are leading the Navy in our ability to manage energy and facilities and ensure their security.

Please be reassured that energy remains a priority today and into the future. As a result of your collective efforts and commitment to continuously improve our energy posture, I am pleased to announce that the NDW/NAVFAC Washington Energy Program was recognized as a 2014 Federal Energy and Water Program Management Award Winner. Bravo Zulu to all of you who made this possible! We are building a solid foundation for a strong energy future.

Stay Energy Focused!

Mark Rich
Rear Admiral, USN
88th Commandant,
Naval District Washington

Bethesda Notebook

Medical Ethics Short Course

Walter Reed Bethesda hosts the 2014 Medical Ethics Short Course Oct. 14-16. The course will be in Memorial Auditorium and offer 21 hours of bioethical training. Some topics to be covered include history/principles of bioethics, ethical issues in pediatric medicine, approaches to healthcare ethics consultations and spirituality in healthcare. Those interested in attending are encouraged to register online before Oct. 7 at <http://www.wrnmcc.capmed.mil/Conferences/Medical%20Ethics/Ethics.aspx>. Those seeking CME must also register at <https://education.mods.army.mil/navycme>. For more information contact Maj. Robert Walter at Robert.j.walter26.mil@mail.mil or Chaplain (Capt.) Jesse Adkinson at jesse.t.adkinson.mil@health.mil.

Army Recruiting Command Commissioning Briefs

The U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) will host a commissioning brief at Walter Reed Bethesda on Oct. 15 from 8 to 9:30 a.m. in Building 10's Clark Auditorium. Programs that will be discussed include the Interservice Physician Assistant Program (IPAP), the AMEDD Enlisted Commissioning Program (AECPRN), the Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP), Masters in Social Work (MSW) and Physical Therapy. Registration is not required to attend, but attendees should sign in and be in their seats by 7:55 a.m. For more information, contact Dr. Eddie Thomas at 301-319-4606 or email eddie.d.thomas3.civ@mail.mil.

Published by offset every Thursday by Comprint Military Publications, 9030 Comprint Court, Gaithersburg, Md. 20877, a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Navy, under exclusive written contract with Naval Support Activity Bethesda, Md. This commercial enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the military services. Contents of The Journal are not necessarily the official views of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of Navy. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense or Comprint, Inc., of the products or services advertised. Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color,



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Full Force Meets with Fans at NSAB

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class (SW/AW/IDW)

Ashanté N. Hammons
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer

High tops, flat tops and bright colors with unthinkable patterns were all the rage in the early 1990s. Twenty-five years ago, the first House Party movie emphasized these fads for everyone. Fans remember the dance moves, the music and the characters of the movie. There was Kid-N-Play...and then, there was Full Force.

Brothers Lucien "Bowlegged Lou" George Jr., Brian "B-Fine" George and Paul Anthony welcomed their excited fans with handshakes, photos and autographs at the Warrior Café at Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) Sept. 10.

Full Force, a family group consisting of the three brothers and their cousins, have been in the music industry for many years. It was their father and uncle who showed them interest in music, said Bowlegged

Lou. Their father overheard Paul singing one day and "he got all excited and told their mother," he said.

"I got jealous and I started singing," Bowlegged Lou added. "Then, my father recruited B-Fine to sing with us, whether he wanted to sing or not. They saw what we were doing and decided to make us a group. Our uncle bought us our first matching outfits. Our uncle was the one who took us to the Apollo Theater amateur hour."

As they grew older, the brothers kept singing and performing. Then, said Bowlegged Lou, they got together with their cousins.

"I saw my cousins perform once at a junior high school show and I was impressed with them," Bowlegged Lou explained. "I told Paul about the show and I suggested that we could merge together. We told B-Fine this idea and he liked it. That's how we became 'Full Force' – because when we perform, our dynamic on stage is a full force."

As the afternoon continued,



Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Ashanté N. Hammons

Full Force members (from left to right, standing) Lucien "Bowlegged Lou," Brian "B-Fine" and Paul Anthony pose for a photo with Marine Corps veteran Richard Banks at a meet and greet at the Warrior Café Sept. 10.

Full Force kept fans engaged by saying popular catch phrases from the House Party movies... with a few variations.

"Do you smell something?" asked Bowlegged Lou.

"I smell something," replied B-Fine.

"I smell candy!" the brothers

said together.

Although the brothers never served in the military, they have the upmost respect for all service members. Their uncle served during the Vietnam War, according to Bowlegged Lou. Full Force has always wanted to come out to NSAB to show

support to the service members, according to B-Fine.

"We are happy to do anything we can for the military," said Bowlegged Lou. "The hospital, Walter Reed, is a big deal and to perform for those people who risk their lives is such a great honor for us."

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National Hispanic Heritage Month Celebrated at NSAB



Photo by Julie Smith

Local band Sol Y Rumba provided entertainment for NSAB's National Hispanic Heritage Month celebration Sept. 25.

By Julie Smith
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer

The Bethesda Multicultural Committee at Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) celebrated National Hispanic Heritage Month Sept. 25 with an event in the piano area of Bldg. 19 featuring a guest speaker, live music and a themed meal.

A proclamation issued by President Barack Obama declared Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 National Hispanic Heritage Month, honoring the rich heritage and cultural diversity that Hispanic Americans have contributed to the United States. The observance commenced on Sept. 15 because five Latin American countries declared their independence from Spanish colonization on Sept. 15, 1821. Under President Lyndon Johnson, the U.S. marked its first National Hispanic Heritage Week in 1968.

"Nearly 50 years after the United States first observed what was then National Hispanic Heritage Week, Hispanics represent a vibrant and thriving part of our diverse Nation," Obama stated. "Their histories and cultures stretch across centuries, and the contributions of those who come to our shores today in search of their dreams continue to add new chapters in our national story. This month, we honor the rich heritage of the Hispanic community and celebrate its countless achievements."

The theme this year, "Hispanics: A legacy of history, a present of action and a future of success," touches on the ways Hispanics have enriched the nation, Obama said. This includes those with roots that trace back generations to those who are just beginning their pursuit of promise in America.

"They have come to represent the spirit of our nation — that with hard work, you can build a better life for yourself and a better future for your children. And they have led and inspired movements that have made our Nation

more equal and more just," Obama continued.

Guest speaker Army Maj. Deanna Hutchings, service chief of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center's (WRNMMC) Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), had her own story to tell. A third generation immigrant, Hutchings' grandfather was born in Mexico and immigrated to the U.S., becoming a migrant worker. Her other grandfather, a son of the Mexican consulate general to America, was born in the U.S. but moved back to Mexico as a child.

"Everyone has a story. We all arrived to this country in various different ways," Hutchings said. "It's an honor to proclaim how proud I am as a Hispanic American and I would love to continue to advocate for those traditions. We are a diverse nation and the Hispanic culture definitely continues to impact the American culture."

Hutchings added that the global definition of "Hispanic" is a term that generalized people of countries ruled by the Spanish empire, including Mexico, Central America, South America and other countries in the Greater Antilles. Incorporated into the U.S. Census in 1970, the Hispanic demographic is comprised of 28 separate groups who may identify themselves as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, Central American, Costa Rican, Guatemalan, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Panamanian, Salvadorian or other Central American. Sixty Hispanics have won the Congressional Medal of Honor dating back to the Civil War, she said.

"So, the Hispanic culture has definitely been a part of not only American culture, but military culture," Hutchings explained. "Events like this help to remind us of those who went through difficult challenges and barriers. Things that are very easy for us now weren't always that way. We wouldn't be here if it hadn't been for our families and those who made those decisions to put forth the effort in difficult times."

Biobank Receives Accreditation from College of American Pathologists

By Sharon Renee Taylor
WRNMMC Public Affairs
staff writer

The first and largest, continuous biorepository in the Military Health Care System can be found here at Walter Reed Bethesda's John P. Murtha Cancer Center (MCC). The Department of Defense (DOD) Center of Excellence for Cancer Care and Research recently received accreditation from the College of American Pathologists (CAP).

Considered the gold standard of certification, CAP awarded DOD's only organization-wide biorepository with the highest level in laboratory accreditation. The MCC biobank received documentation Sept. 10 that verifies the laboratory follows the highest standards while ensuring confidence that the best practices are maintained and high-quality biospecimens are available for medical research.

The three-year accreditation was based on the biobank's superior performance during a comprehensive on-site inspection and rigorous review of operations by certified biorepository industry peers on July 21. Over a thousand items were inspected during the day-long process, which held MCC accountable for nearly 300 requirements. A CAP committee reviewed findings from the visit over two months, issued a preliminary decision in August and executed an official

award letter for accreditation superior performance in September.

"CAP accreditation is a rare honor for an academic biorepository [such as MCC], and validates our commitment to providing DOD and our partnering medical researchers with the highest-quality service and samples," said Army Col. Craig D. Shriver, a surgical oncologist at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) which houses the MCC where he also serves as director.

A biobank, also known as a biorepository, is a collection of human samples, either blood samples or tissues from biopsies and surgeries specifically acquired with patient consent for research later, Shriver stated.

According to CAP, which has accredited laboratories for more than half a century, access to more quality biospecimens is required as new technologies emerge. Varying biospecimen handling practices by biobanks increase the possibility of misleading data and incorrect analysis for studies.

The MCC biobank totals more than 65,000 samples and specimens from a total of 8,000 patients to date, Shriver explained. "The capacity is unlimited," he said. The biobank samples are presently in use by more than 20 active research studies. In the last 18 months, ten research publications have generated from studies using biobank specimen.

"As a research protocol, patients

themselves who sign up [for biobank donation] do not directly benefit from participation, which they are told when providing consent. It is future generations who benefit, based on the scientific findings from the samples," Shriver said.

The biorepository stores de-identified patients' tissues and blood samples – an important developing resource for medical researchers at Walter Reed Bethesda, Uniformed Services University (USU), National Cancer Institute, and other partnering organizations, Shriver added. The MCC biobank has received institutional review board (IRB) approval to allow researchers to notify patients if they are eligible for a particular research study and all patients' samples are obtained with IRB approval and full, patient consent.

"In order to prepare for the accreditation, we had to consolidate three large existing programs [the Clinical Breast Care Project, the Center for Prostate Disease Research, and the legacy United States Military Cancer Institute Biospecimen Network], where tissue collection was managed separately through differing procedures, into one integrated and seamless operation with standardized procedures," explained Army Maj. Thomas A. Summers, Jr., a WRNMMC pathologist, who led the exhaustive preparation for accreditation that began nearly two years ago.

The process was a great undertak-

ing, the pathologist said. "Essentially, in preparation for the initial inspection we built and established a brand new, world-class laboratory within existing processes and facilities," he said.

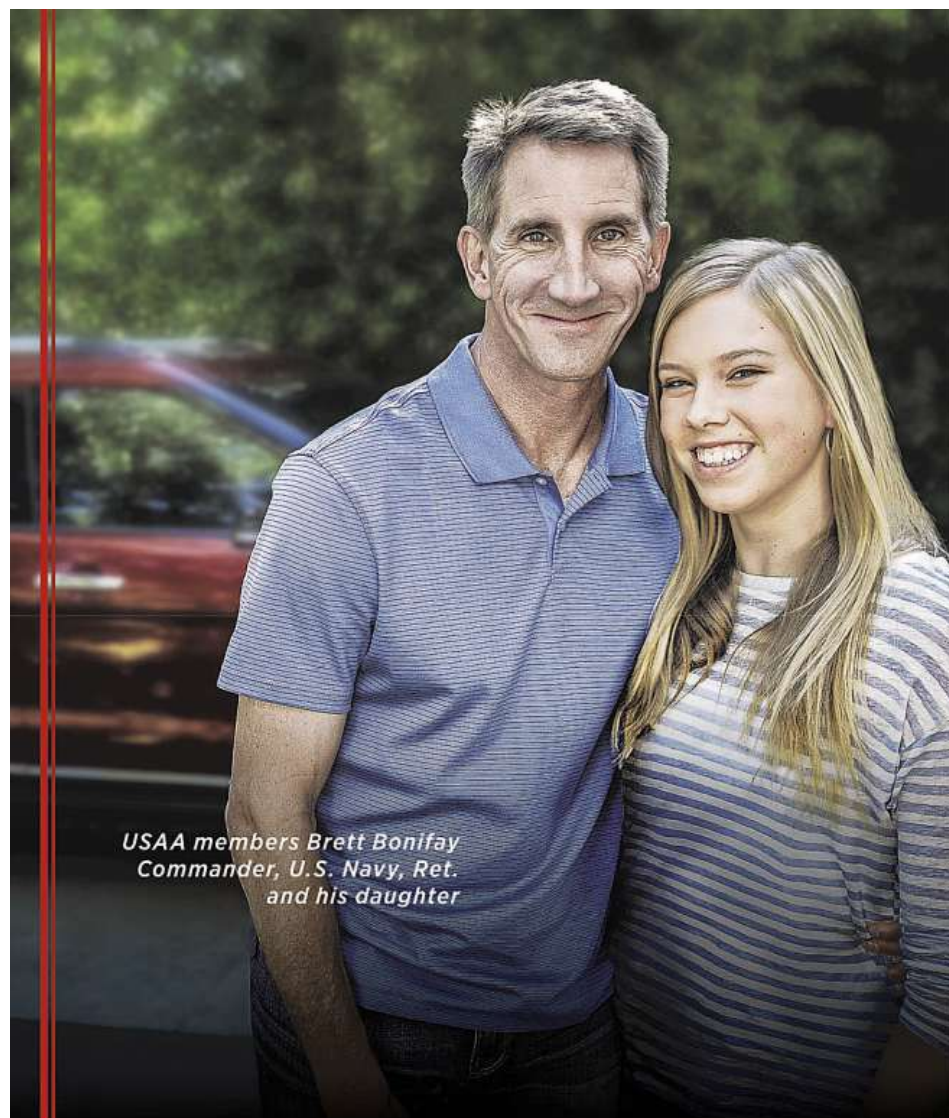
"Shortly after we merged the Murtha Cancer Center and our biorepository section, we decided that we wanted to pursue this voluntary accreditation because it was important we felt for the DOD, for Walter Reed Bethesda command, for the National Capital Region and for USU, our partner, to know that we were meeting the highest standards for this operation that we were running," Summers added.

Accreditation focuses on quality, accuracy and procedural consistency which patient outcomes directly depend on, he said. The inspection offered an independent measure to objectively evaluate strengths and weaknesses.

Up for review in 2017, Shriver explained what the voluntary accreditation means.

"It signifies confidence to the taxpayer that they're getting the highest value for their money, it means confidence to the command that the people that they've put in charge of this operation are adhering to the highest standards and have been audited – it's really an audit – by an outside accrediting agency that comes in and says, 'you're doing it exactly right,

See **BIOBANK** page 6



USAA members Brett Bonifay
Commander, U.S. Navy, Ret.
and his daughter

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Chief Selected as Navy's First Enlisted Fellow for Capitol Hill Legislative Program

By Katrina Skinner
WRNMMC Public Affairs
staff writer

In June 2014, Walter Reed Bethesda's Chief Legalman Ronald Ratliff was selected as the first enlisted Navy legislative fellow to work on Capitol Hill. He begins the assignment in November.

The Navy Legislative Fellow (LEGIS) program had previously been limited to service college eligible, restricted and unrestricted line and staff corps officers in the permanent grades of lieutenant, lieutenant commander and commander. However, after a review and local solicitation this past January, the Navy Office of Legislative Affairs opened the LEGIS program to qualified enlisted applicants (E-7 and above) from the National Capital Region for assignment to the office of a U.S. congressional member.

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Michael Stevens nominated Ratliff for the assignment. In making the nomination, MCPON looked at a combination of factors, such as sustained superior performance and where a candidate is in his or her career. "This assignment is a bit out of the standard career path for most people," explained Navy Fellow Program Manager Lt. Cmdr. Natalia Henriquez.

"Ratliff was a great candidate," Henriquez added. "Not only did he have a strong application package, his personality – adaptable, flexible, and friendly – will really suit the job. We are excited about having him as the very first enlisted fellow."

The interview panel consisted of five division directors from the Navy Office of Legislative

Affairs, plus Henriquez. "For the enlisted folks, we interview the applicants [from those the] Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy forwards to us. It's like any standard interview – looking for who is the most poised, articulate, mature, and accomplished," Henriquez said.

She explained duties of a fellow may include drafting legislation, floor debate and hearing preparation, planning and analysis of public policy, answering constituent inquiries and serving as congressional liaisons. "A year-long fellowship followed by a utilization tour in the Navy Office of Legislative Affairs makes this a two-year program," she continued.

Ratliff added his duties at Walter Reed Bethesda have prepared him for his next tour of duty.

"The issues that we deal with range from malpractice to ethics opinions to health care issues," the chief said. "We have to peel back layers to find out what does the law say. I act on behalf of the government and I present a case to a panel of members that decide the fate of a service member."

"The thing that I am [most] excited about is to be at the heartbeat of the nation; Capitol Hill, that's where it all happens, that's where everything is done," Ratliff continued.

He said he looks forward to working on the Hill, but will miss his colleagues at Walter Reed Bethesda.

"I love the people here," Ratliff said. "It probably has been my favorite command as far as the people go...I love it here, I love this job, I'm going to miss this job, I'm going to miss the people, and I could not possibly have gotten selected for this position without having worked



Photos by Katrina Skinner

Walter Reed Bethesda's Staff Judge Advocate Lt. Cmdr. Tamara O'Neil (left) and Chief Legalman Ronald Ratliff (right) confer on a legal matter. Ratliff has been selected as the first enlisted Navy legislative fellow to work on Capitol Hill and begins the assignment next month. "I will miss his calm, thoughtful response and his caring nature. It has brought us through so many critical moments smoothly," O'Neil said.

for the people that I work with."

"There are a few things I [will] miss about Chief [Ratliff]," said Paralegal Specialist Vera Cropp, who has worked with the chief for the past three years. "I will miss his sense of humor; he always makes me laugh – even when I'm stressed. He's a great friend."

"As a chief, he knows how and (is) able to get things done," Cropp continued. "No matter what is going on, he remains positive and effective."

Walter Reed Bethesda's Staff Judge Advocate, Lt. Cmdr. Tamara O'Neil expressed similar sentiments. "I will miss his calm, thoughtful response and his caring nature. It has brought us through so many critical moments smoothly," she said.



Walter Reed Bethesda's Chief Legalman Ronald Ratliff has been selected as the first enlisted Navy legislative fellow to work on Capitol Hill. Ratliff's duties for the year-long Capitol Hill assignment may include drafting legislation, floor debate and hearing preparation, planning and analysis of public policy, answering constituent inquiries, and serving as a congressional liaison.

BIOBANK

Continued from pg. 5

here's the certificate to prove that,' helping to affirm the medical center about the work "we're doing on all levels," he said.

Shriver continued, "It means confidence to our patients – who willingly give their time and their body components, their tissues and say, 'we do want to let you to use these leftover tissues for the good of society and the military.' It gives them confidence to know that that's being used in the best way possible – it gives us confidence that we're doing the best because we want to do the very best we can."

SAFETY

Continued from pg. 1

Antoine continued. PCT, implemented at other military medical facilities, has been shown to enhance patient safety by reducing falls, medication errors and improving communication between patients and providers, as well as communication between providers, which are also similar objectives of TeamSTEPPS, according to Mosley.

Mosley explained TeamSTEPPS is evidence-based, consisting of five key principles: team structure, communication, leadership, situ-

ation monitoring and mutual support.

Army Staff Sgt. Angela Stevenson, an instructor for TeamSTEPPS at Walter Reed Bethesda, explained during the TeamSTEPPS train-the-trainer course, patient care is a team sport and everyone on the team needs to be an active participant. "Everyone works in different types of patient care settings, so the more people are able to share their experiences, the more the rest of us can learn from it, and I've actually learned a lot by teaching this class," she said.

Stevenson added, to be successful, staff at all levels of the patient care team need to feel comfortable speaking up to express a concern or

ask questions of colleagues. The Education and Training non-commissioned officer said TeamSTEPPS provides tools and techniques to foster trust, collaboration, and communication to create an environment in which safe, high-quality care is the top priority. "Constantly pushing towards a culture of patient safety is what we're striving for," she said.

Another TeamSTEPPS instructor and respiratory therapist, Army Staff Sgt. Eric Serrano explained being open to change is an important component of the program and achieving a culture of safety. He explained to achieve the safest and highest quality health care requires an in-

tegrated delivery system of people and processes open to evolution and adaptation.

Serrano added there are various steps to change, including: building the guiding team; developing a change vision and strategy; understanding and buying into the vision and strategy; and empowering others to act in order to create a new culture.

Mosley explained TeamSTEPPS can help create a culture of enhanced performance and patient safety by improving communication. TeamSTEPPS contributes to positive outcomes in health care and improved patient safety, according to DOD and AHRQ officials.

Team Navy Kicks Off 2014 Warrior Games

**By Ensign Matt Chandler
U.S. Fleet Forces
Command Public Affairs**

Team Navy celebrated the start of the fifth annual Warrior Games during a festive opening ceremony at the Olympic Training Center, Sept. 28, in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

After the ceremony, Team Navy, which is sponsored by Navy Wounded Warrior (NWW), Safe Harbor, the Navy's wounded warrior support program, kicked off the competition with two sitting volleyball matches. Team Navy was victorious against the Special Operations Command (SOCOM) team but fell to the Marine Corps.

"I'm excited and nervous about this experience," said Navy Chief Logistics Specialist Averill Malone, a first-time Warrior Games competitor. "I am doing this for my family."

Malone, who was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder following combat deployments in 2007 and 2009, will compete in archery at the Warrior Games.

The opening ceremony was attended by Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michelle Howard, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Mike Stevens, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Jessica L. Garfola Wright, and a host of other military leaders. The wounded warrior athletes' friends and families cheered from the bleachers,



U.S. Navy photo by EJ Hersom

Marine Cpl. Jorge Salazar, left, passes the Olympic torch to retired Chief Yeoman Sharona Young during the opening ceremony for the 2014 Warrior Games at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo.

and keynote speakers focused on the positive influence of adaptive sports on the recovery of seriously wounded, ill and injured service members.

"Over the next six days, you'll be inspired and you'll be overwhelmed," said Charlie Huebner, vice president of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Foundation, while addressing the athletes. "It's not about

these six days in Colorado; it's about the other 359 days each year."

Representing Team Navy as torchbearers were retired Sonar Technician (Surface) 2nd Class Shericka Goza and retired Navy Chief Yeoman Sharona Young. They are Team Navy's first female torchbearers, and, likewise, they are among the largest group of

women ever to compete on behalf of Team Navy at the Warrior Games.

"It was an honor to be a torchbearer, and I'm still surprised that I was chosen," said Young, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis last year. "Just looking at what (these wounded warrior athletes have) been through - everyone has their own issues,

whether they are mental or physical - and just looking at their strength and what they've been able to achieve, it makes me think, 'O.K., I can do this. I don't just have to sit here and deteriorate.'"

On the volleyball court, Team Navy opened the Warrior Games strong with a decisive 2-0 victory over the SOCOM team. Later, despite a close second set, Team Navy lost its second match to the Marine Corps team.

Thirty-nine wounded warrior athletes are competing on behalf of Team Navy this year. The Warrior Games take place Sept. 28-Oct. 4, and approximately 200 service members with upper-body, lower-body, spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, visual impairments, serious illnesses and post-traumatic stress will compete in seven sports.

To learn more about NWW, the Warrior Games and adaptive athletics, visit <http://safeharbor.navylive.dodlive.mil>; call 855-NAVY WWP (628-9997) or email navywoundedwarrior@navy.mil. Follow NWW on Facebook (www.facebook.com/navysafeharbor) and Twitter (@navysafeharbor) for the latest news from Colorado Springs.

For more news from Commander, Navy Installations Command, visit www.navy.mil/local/cni/.

PHARMACY

Continued from pg. 1

freedom of mobility. Jiatu explained how the pharmacy is going to electronic pagers instead of paper numbers to help.

"We will be giving customers these small restaurant style pagers and when their prescription is filled they will get a page to come and pick it up," Jiatu said.

With the new pagers, customers can shop at the NEX or eat at the food court and not have to wait for their number to be called.

The NEX Pharmacy currently has 30 pagers and plans to acquire more in the future.

Kelly said another part of becoming full service is a registered pharmacist will be avail-

able on site at the NEX satellite pharmacy to answer questions about medications.

Jiatu said that by having a registered pharmacist on site that "any of the benefits that they can get at the other pharmacies, like consultation or counseling, is available here."

Due to his condition Carney has to take what he called "nonstandard medications" and said with a full time registered pharmacist on site "having help would be very useful." Patients who come to the NEX to get their refills as either a pickup or to be processed on the day they appear can also park directly in the NEX parking lot without a parking pass.

The pharmacy will be open to all active duty, dependents and retirees 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Sunday.

Code Green Exercise Tests Preparedness



Photo by Sarah Marshall

Walter Reed Bethesda conducted a Code Green response drill Sept. 25 as part of continued efforts to maintain readiness. Emergency Department staff members acted quickly in response to the exercise, which tested staff members' response to a Code Green, activated in the event of a mass casualty.

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Diabetes Institute Educates Patients, Healthcare Professionals

By Sarah Marshall
WRNMMC Public
Affairs staff writer

About 29 million Americans currently have diabetes, and an estimated 81 million have prediabetes – that’s more than one out of every three adults at an increased risk for developing diabetes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Without weight loss and moderate physical activity, 15 to 30 percent of those with prediabetes, within five years, will likely develop type 2 diabetes, the CDC reports. Type 2 diabetes develops when the body cannot properly use insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas. As an individual gains weight, the body becomes more insulin resistant; when the body is resistant to insulin, sugar (glucose) doesn’t get into the cells, remaining instead in the blood cell and causing



Courtesy photo

Army Col. (Dr.) Robert Vigersky, director of the Diabetes Institute at Walter Reed Bethesda, explains the Diabetes Institute remains involved in research to enhance diabetes treatment and continuously educates patients and health care professionals on the importance of diabetes prevention as well as management.

damage to a number of organs, explained Army Col. (Dr.) Robert Vigersky, director of the Diabetes Institute at Walter Reed Bethesda. Type 2 diabetes can develop at any age but is usually seen in middle-aged and older adults. In most cases, it can be prevented.

Type 1 diabetes occurs when no insulin is made

due to autoimmune destruction of the cells in the pancreas that makes it. There is no known way to prevent it. It can also develop at any age but is predominantly seen in children and adolescents. It represents five to 10 percent of those with diabetes, Vigersky said.

At Walter Reed Bethesda, the Diabetes Institute

remains involved in research to enhance treatment, and continuously educates patients and health care professionals on the importance of prevention as well as management, Vigersky explained.

“The Diabetes Institute has been in existence for 14 years now, and one of its missions is education,” he said.

The institute offers a variety of educational programs and support groups, including a course for those with prediabetes which focuses on how to prevent diabetes. There’s also a Survival Skills course for newly-diagnosed diabetics, offering the basics of diabetes management, as well as an American Diabetes Association-certified, in-depth two-day course that goes into greater detail about how to better manage the disease, he said.

Patients with diabetes are encouraged to participate in these educational programs regularly so they can stay up-to-date on the latest findings and treatment options, he added.

“Over the years, we’ve done research in a number of areas that have all been aimed at helping people with diabetes and prediabetes,” Vigersky said.

Some of the research they’re most excited about, he said, involves continuous glucose monitoring, a technology that’s developed over the last decade. Glucose monitoring is recommended for most patients with diabetes and, though not generally convenient, is typically done by pricking your finger and putting a drop of blood on a strip to measure glucose, he explained. Depending on the severity of one’s diabetes, monitoring may be required several times daily. With continuous glucose monitoring, a small, unobtrusive monitor is placed under the skin which remains there for a week at a time. It transmits the sugar on a continuous basis, about every five minutes, and the patient can use a small, hand-held device to track their blood sugar trends.

“People can see in real-time what the effects of their meal size, meal com-

position and exercise are,” he explained.

This technology is generally used in patients with Type 1 diabetes, but Dr. Vigersky and his group first studied this in patients with Type 2 diabetes who are either just on oral medication or a combination of oral medication and long-acting insulin to see if, through real-time feedback, they will modify their behavior and try to prevent their sugar from going too high or low, he said.

“They really loved being able to see what was happening in real-time,” Vigersky said.

The institute was the first to do a study, publishing their results in 2012 in a medical journal, *Diabetes Care*, showing the effectiveness in helping people get their blood sugar under control and losing some weight, he continued.

“We’ve now embarked on some additional studies to see if this will work in people with prediabetes. What we’re trying to do is give them a chance to use this technology to see if it can improve their blood sugars, and maybe eventually prevent them from developing diabetes.”

Additionally, the institute is studying the effects of smart pill bottles. Vigersky said this is new and sophisticated technology designed to help remind people to take their medication.

“We’re looking to see if this improves adherence to taking medication, leading to better outcomes,” he said.

The smart pill bottle is programmed to know when you should be taking your medication, and how many times a day. If the pill isn’t removed from the bottle within a certain timeframe, it sends the patient either an email or text message or gives them a phone call, he explained.

“We think it has a lot of promise for keeping people on schedule,” he said. It’s currently being used for patients with diabetes in Vigersky’s research studies, but could be used for other health conditions.

Vigersky went on to note the importance of prevention, and recognizing

the military is not immune to diabetes – the military is no different than the general population in terms of frequency of diabetes.

“Diabetes prevention is important because the consequences of having diabetes are potentially devastating,” he added.

People who have diabetes are at higher risk of serious health complications such as blindness, kidney failure, heart disease, stroke, and loss of toes, feet or legs, according to the CDC. Additionally, risk of death for adults with diabetes is 50 percent higher than for adults without diabetes. Medical costs for people with diabetes are also twice as high as those without diabetes.

Prevention can be challenging, though, Vigersky said, because prediabetes and diabetes are asymptomatic in many respects. It doesn’t “hurt” when your blood sugar goes up.

“If you had pain every time your blood sugar went up, you’d try to avoid it happening, but unfortunately it doesn’t provide that kind of signal,” he said.

Exercise, proper nutrition, weight loss, and stress reduction are key to reducing one’s chances of developing diabetes, noted Lucia Novak, a nurse practitioner in the Diabetes Institute.

“Any kind of exercise is important to prevent type 2 diabetes, but aerobic exercise is one of the most important ways to reduce weight,” Novak said. “Also, resistance training is important because it builds lean muscle mass and helps metabolize sugars.”

It’s about enjoying yourself, she said.

“You must find something you like to do and devote at least 30 to 60 minutes to activity per day, even if it is completed in increments throughout the day,” she said.

The best way to prevent diabetes, ultimately, is by leading a healthy lifestyle, she said.

For more information about courses offered by the Diabetes Institute at Walter Reed Bethesda, contact Virginia Schmidt at 301-319-2872.

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